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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Senate of the State of Illinois learned with regret of the death of Clifford T. Johnson of River Forest on Friday, February 25, 2005; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Johnson was born on a dairy farm in Beresford, South Dakota; after leaving high school early to help deliver milk, he returned to high school and graduated in 1934; he then went to Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to become a Lutheran minister; while there, he connected with the school's radio station and was told he had a strong speaking voice; and

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WHEREAS, He met his wife, Luella, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and in 1938, they were married; they moved to Lincoln, Nebraska, where he worked for Central States Network, then moved to KOIL in Omaha; he was soon noticed and signed with WBBM in Chicago in 1941; and

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WHEREAS, In 1942, Mr. Johnson enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served stateside until 1945; he returned to WBBM and was host of "Meet the Missus", "Shopping with the Missus", and "Listen to Cliff"; he caught the notice of Philip K. Wrigley, who signed him at KNX Radio, an affiliate of CBS in Hollywood; there he filled in for Jack Bailey during his show "Queen for a Day" and once for Art Linkletter and his segment "Kids Say the Darndest Things", which sparked Mr. Johnson's "Breakfast with the Johnsons" idea; and

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WHEREAS, In 1946, the family moved back to Chicago, and Mr. Johnson began broadcasting "Breakfast With the Johnsons" from their home, a show that included his four daughters and one son at the breakfast table; the show was a regular segment from 1947 until 1958 and often included surprise visits from the milk man or the minister; it was a forerunner of today's

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1 reality television shows; and

2 WHEREAS, He later became host of "Sounds of Europe" and
3 received the Dwight Eisenhower Award for his broadcast reports
4 from 11 European countries; he also served as managing editor
5 from 1964 to 1968 at WNUS, the first all-news station in
6 Chicago; and

7 WHEREAS, Mr. Johnson left radio in 1968 to start Lucliff
8 Realty in Oak Park, and in 1970, launched Cliff Johnson Travel
9 Agency, which he sold in 1995; and

10 WHEREAS, At the age of 77, he returned to college and
11 received his bachelor's degree in communications from
12 Concordia University in River Forest; ten years later, he
13 received a master's degree in theology; he served on
14 Concordia's Foundation Board of Directors for two terms and was
15 a university communication consultant for 15 years; and

16 WHEREAS, In recent years, he produced cable shows aired on
17 the Oak Park-River Forest access cable station; he earned a
18 cable award for his work on a program on the Judeo-Christian
19 culture present in the community; and

20 WHEREAS, In 1985, Mr. Johnson founded Oak Park's Volunteer
21 Center; he was a member of the Oak Park-River Forest Rotary
22 Club and was the recipient of the club's Carl S. Winters
23 Community Service Award in 2004; he also served as president of
24 the Rotary and Lions clubs and the American Society of Travel
25 Agents; and

26 WHEREAS, The passing of Clifford T. Johnson has been deeply
27 felt by many, especially his daughters, Sandra Mueller, Linda
28 Geer, Pamela Cornell, and Vicki Riordan; his son, Clifford Jr.;
29 his sister, Doris Burkhart-Thurk; and his 15 grandchildren and
30 13 great-grandchildren; his wife, Luella, preceded him in death

1 in 1993; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
3 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
4 Clifford T. Johnson, whose sterling character and pleasing
5 personality will be long remembered, and we extend our sincere
6 condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved
7 him; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
9 presented to his family as an expression of our deepest
10 sympathy.